

Reasons to use songs in the English classroom

Título: Reasons to use songs in the English classroom. **Target:** Educación Infantil y Primaria. **Asignatura:** Inglés. **Autor:** Laura M^a Segura Sábado, Maestro, Lengua extranjera, inglés.

The use of songs in the English classroom takes into consideration several reasons of effective, cognitive, linguistic and cultural value.

AFFECTIVE REASONS

We have to consider Krashen's affective filter hypothesis. He says that for optimal learning, the affective filter should be low or weak, by means of fostering positive attitudes towards learning.

Consequently, teachers should provide a positive and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom by means of, for example, songs.

Hence, songs may be used:

- to present happy and stress-free activities.
- to stimulate discussion of attitudes and feelings.
- to encourage creativity and use of imagination.
- to provide a variety and fun to learning

COGNITIVE REASONS

Due to the repetitive nature of songs, it develops automaticity.

Automaticity is the ability to do things without occupying the mind with the low-level details required, allowing it to become an automatic response pattern or habit. It is usually the result of learning, repetition and practice.

The repetitive nature of songs also enhances boys and girls memorization. Some songs as "Ten little Indians" or "Ten little monkeys" are an example of repetitive songs you can use with small children.

Movement songs are also a motivating activity to do with little children, sons as "Head, shoulders, knees and toes".


LINGUISTIC REASONS

Songs are an excellent example of colloquial English, learning new words and expressions.


From a phonological point of view, songs must be sung really fast so students can learn liking words and strong and weak forms.

Students from third cycle love modern music such as "Alejandro" by Lady Gaga oy "7 things" by Miley Cyrius (Hanna Montana).

Molly Malone



In Dublin's fair city, where the girls are so pretty
 I first set my eyes on sweet Molly Malone
 As she wheeled her wheel-barrow
 Through streets broad and narrow
 Crying cockles and mussels, alive, alive-O!
 Alive, alive-O! alive, alive-O!
 Crying cockles and mussels, alive, alive-O!
 She was a fish-monger, but sure 'twas no wonder
 For so were her father and mother before
 And they each wheeled their barrow
 Through streets broad and narrow
 Crying cockles and mussels, alive, alive-O!
 Alive, alive-O! alive, alive-O!
 Crying cockles and mussels, alive, alive-O!



She died of a fever, and no one could save her
 And that was the end of sweet Molly Malone
 But her ghost wheels her barrow
 Through streets broad and narrow
 Crying cockles and mussels, alive, alive-O!
 Alive, alive-O! alive, alive-O!
 Crying cockles and mussels, alive, alive-O!

CULTURAL REASONS

Songs develop student's sociocultural competence and favour a better understanding of the English culture and folklore. They help children develop attitudes of respect towards another culture, different from their own.

For example:

- "Molly Malone"- The Irish song about a beautiful fishmonger who died very young.
- Nursery Rhymes as "Humpty Dumpty", "This is the way", "if your happy and you know it"...

OTHER REASONS

Music is often the major source of English outside classroom.

Children will be actively involved in their learning, as songs enhance their motivation.

Parents will enjoy hearing their children singing.

Nevertheless, in a learner centred approach I think it is essential to bear in mind the point of view of the students, they think about songs that are fun, accessible, releasing and highly memorable. ●